What is claimed is:

1. A message broker for managing subscription requests in a multicast messaging system comprising a plurality of publishers publishing information to the broker and a plurality of subscribers subscribing to information received from one or more publishers, the broker comprising:

means for receiving a subscription request pointing to topic information in which the requesting subscriber is interested, the topic information defining a specific topic within a topic hierarchy;

means for parsing said request to determine if said request includes a wildcard; and

means, responsive to determining that said request does include a wildcard, for instructing the requesting subscriber to listen on a multicast address associated with the topic in the topic hierarchy which precedes said wildcard.

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- 2. The message broker of claim 1 comprising: means for assigning the multicast address to said preceding topic.
- 25 3. The message broker of claim 2 wherein the multicast address for the preceding topic is inherited from parent topic information

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4. A method for managing subscription requests in a multicast messaging system, the messaging system comprising a plurality of publishers publishing information to a broker and a plurality of subscribers subscribing to information received from one or more publishers, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving a subscription request pointing to topic information in which the requesting subscriber is interested, the topic information defining a specific topic within a topic hierarchy;

parsing said request to determine if said request includes a wildcard; and

responsive to determining that said request does include a wildcard, for instructing the requesting subscriber to listen on a multicast address associated with the topic in the topic hierarchy which precedes said wildcard.

- 5. The method of claim 4 comprising: assigning the multicast address to said preceding topic.
- 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the multicast address for the preceding topic is inherited from parent topic information.

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7. A computer program for managing subscription requests in a multicast messaging system, the messaging system comprising a plurality of publishers publishing information to a broker and a plurality of subscribers subscribing to information received from one or more publishers, the computer program comprising program code means adapted to perform, when said program is run on a computer, the steps of:

receiving a subscription request pointing to topic information in which the requesting subscriber is interested, the topic information defining a specific topic within a topic hierarchy;

parsing said request to determine if said request includes a wildcard; and

responsive to determining that said request does include a wildcard, for instructing the requesting subscriber to listen on a multicast address associated with the topic in the topic hierarchy which precedes said wildcard.

8. The computer program of claim 7, wherein the program code means is also adapted to perform the following step when said program is run on a computer:

assigning the multicast address to said preceding topic.

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- 9. The computer program of claim 8, wherein the multicast address for the preceding topic is inherited from parent topic information.
- 10. A multicast messaging system for managing subscription requests, the system comprising:
 - a message broker;
- a plurality of publishers publishing information to the broker:
- a plurality of subscribers subscribing to information received from one or more publishers,

the subscribers comprising:

means for registering subscription requests with the broker,

the broker comprising:

means for receiving a subscription request pointing to topic

information in which the requesting subscriber is interested, the topic information defining a specific topic within a topic hierarchy;

means for parsing said request to determine if said request includes

a wildcard; and

means, responsive to determining that said request does include a

wildcard, for instructing the requesting subscriber to listen on a multicast address associated with the topic in the topic hierarchy which precedes said wildcard.